

THE SEA TRAGEDY OF THE OLIVE PECKER,

THE JOURNAL PRESENTS THE FIRST DETAILED AND AUTHENTIC STORY OF THE MURDER OF CAPTAIN

HERE is the simple story, told in sailor language by John Andersen, cook of the ill-fated schooner Olive Pecker, who shot the captain in his own cabin, and a moment later fired into the rigging and brought the body of the first mate down on deck, with a bullet hole in the head.

This strange story of the sea has all the elements of a Robert Louis Stevenson romance. The murder of Captain J. W. Whitman, of Rockland, Me., and Mate William Saunders took place one hundred and twenty miles off the Brazilian coast, down in the South Atlantic Ocean.

Although odds and ends of information as to this ocean tragedy have from time to time reached us from Bahia, the Journal to-day, for the first time, is able to present the full detailed and coherent narrative of what happened as written out and sworn to by John Andersen, the chief actor in this most extraordinary tragedy of the high seas.

Dramatis Personae of the Tragedy on the High Seas:

- JAMES W. WHITMAN..... Captain.
- WILLIAM SAUNDERS..... Mate.
- JOHN ANDERSEN..... Cook.
- WILLIAM HORSBURGH..... Engineer.
- ANDREW MARCH..... "The Big Fellow."
- JUAN DE DIOS BARRIAL Y GUITERRES..... "The Spaniard."
- MARTIN BARSTAD and JOHNLIND, Other Members of the Crew.
- THE DOG..... For Whom the First Blow Was Struck.

BY JOHN ANDERSEN, THE COOK.

THIS is the true story of how I came to kill Captain Whitman and the mate. Every word of this statement I swear is true:

The captain was very down on me. I don't know the reason why fully. He struck me one day, and after that things went on as they had gone before he struck me. Once I went down in the cabin and I heard him say, "When you see a chance give him a shove," meaning me, I thought. I know the captain told the mate that, but I don't know now exactly what to think about it. I don't know now if it was me exactly or if it was somebody else. The captain had been threatening, and I expected any time for him to give it to some one. I don't want to run the man down: I don't want to run the mate down, but I'll tell you his expressions and the ways he had. The captain was like a human being without any heart at all; so was the mate. When I would talk kindly to him, the mate, he would put me down, and I had very little talk with him when I found out what he meant.

The mate's watch on deck was from 4 to 8 in the morning, and I used to give him his coffee at the galley. One day I took the draw bucket that I used to keep between the galley and the deck locker. The mate stood where I kept the bucket. I didn't have any thought of anything then, only my work. I went up to the place the mate stood by and started for the rigging, very close to the cabin. There was nothing around the vessel to prevent a man from going overboard. I started to walk by him, and he gave me a shove. I flew at the rigging straight, caught the rigging, and swung right outside it, with the draw bucket in my hand as I swung. My heart flew up into my mouth, and I thought that I was gone. The mate started by me, and I was going to holler out. I asked him, "What are you doing?" He answered me something; I could not make out what he said. Then I didn't know what to do or anything, but

nothing happened.

The engineer was just as anxious to get away from the vessel as I was, and I was in such a fix I proposed to him that we would cut the boat away while the captain and mate were below, and that was the only way we could get away from the vessel. He didn't want to do that; he was afraid they would pick us up and then go to work and kill us. Then I assured him that he couldn't pick us up; it was dark, and he couldn't see the boat. The engineer didn't want to do that, and I told him if we could see a vessel or a man-of-war we would jump overboard, and so I would, too, the fix we was in.

We had a dog, and it used to be at the galley door. Of course, I liked the dog. I liked to treat him nice, and I always did that. The captain told me to keep him away from the door. But I didn't like to hurt him or force him away. After breakfast in the morning he was coming up at the door and I gave him breakfast. He finished and stayed at the door. I chased him away and he came back again. I had some dirty water settlings from the water in the bucket. The water gets stirred up when the vessel is to sea. I took up that and threw it on him. He turned, and, as he turned, the bucket struck him in the neck, not much, because the dog didn't limp or anything. He made a noise, and the captain was up on deck. Then I knew what was coming.

I looked around the galley to see if I could hide somewhere. He was coming down there like a wild man. I was standing there, and I thought that would be my last. Then he struck me right in the side. I flew up against the stove and skinned two knuckles right into the bone. He cursed me then for all he was worth. Then he looked up at one of the men at work standing right on top of the galley, and he says: "You —; I will have the heart out of you." He went up on deck, and, coming aft (now you must excuse me for this, but I will tell you what I heard. I heard a good many things he had been telling in Bahia, because I have found out a good many things he had been telling), he says: "—, I will have you." He put his fist through the pilot house to the man at the wheel, and says: "You dirty —, you are the next." His name was Barstad, a Norwegian.

I stood this, and did not know what would become of me then. I prayed to God. When the mate shoved me overboard I prayed to God to save me or do something. I didn't know what. I was completely lost altogether. I stood there bewildered, thinking what would become of me, what I had done for being put in such a fix. I didn't understand it.

Then I went up on the galley steps and looked around me to see if I could see a vessel to board. I would have jumped overboard right there. The mate was standing there, and I called to him: "Mr. Saunders," I says, "wont you protect me until we get into port?" He turned around and said: "Go to hell, you will get killed, anyhow." That was the answer I got from the mate, and there I was.

I didn't know what to do. I was completely gone. I washed my dishes and didn't know hardly how it was: I looked at the time, and it was twenty-five minutes to ten. I looked behind me to the dresser, and I thought to myself, "My God! dishes not done, and it is coming near dinner time." That time in the morning I had generally finished cleaning in the galley, about nine o'clock, and swept and cleaned and dusted the cabin, as I did every morning. I thought if I dare go down in the cabin. There was where the thought came into me. I thought then, "Well, I can't. I am bound to do my work, anyhow."

So I started down in the cabin, thinking the captain would be on deck, as he used to be when I was cleaning. I started down in the cabin. The captain was sitting down in the cabin in a big arm chair, one of those big, easy-comfort chairs. He sat there, and had a bottle of beer, drinking, as he used to do. He drank beer very often. He was glaring at me, and mumbled on something at me, and cursed me, and I didn't know what to do, whether to run on deck. I thought if I ran on deck I might as well run right overboard. I thought it was come to the worst. So I started into the mate's room first.

Now I will tell you something wrong that I told the Consul. I took the gun from my trunk. I started in the mate's room sweeping. I seen the mate's gun lying on the shelf. I had seen him two or three mornings take something out of his pocket and put it on the shelf, and it was the gun. I took it down and put it inside my shirt. It was an old gun, and I kind of pulled the trigger up like.

I commenced sweeping, and all kinds of thoughts came into my mind. I



finished my room, and I didn't know what to do. But I had my work, and I started at the forward cabin that divided by the door. I was coming, as "You — — —." He got the gun and fired at him. The shot left temple. He was facing me.

Then I thought, "The mate was the captain's room, and he had shelf, and a big sword-kind of dagger in his berth all the time. I ran in and I didn't know where the mate was, and he told me something to him. Of course, I down on to the rail. He says: 'Where is the captain?' he says: 'on the deckload and he took a name. He came at me with the mate he said: "Don't shoot," or some

The first shot didn't take me keep on and fired three shots, and there I was. I didn't know and I didn't see anybody. Some They came up and we threw the been saying in the papers that like that.

"We threw the mate overboard, threw the captain overboard. can do as you like with me. You my life."

"Yes, we all know that," they I took them down in the cabin what they were going to do: I thought anything of them, beat them.

One of the men, the Spaniard something in that manner. Of

